

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00

USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SENSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8131

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS PRETORIA 3582

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TAGS: PINT, PINS, RH

SUBJ: SMITH CALLS GENERAL ELECTION

REF: PRETORIA 3325

1. SUMMARY: IAN SMITH'S SURPRISE CALL FOR A GENERAL ELECTION AND IMPLICATION THAT IT MIGHT BE FOLLOWED BY AN AS-YET-UNDEFINED INTERNAL SETTLEMENT, RECEIVED A GENERALLY NEGATIVE REACTION FROM BLACK RHODESIAN LEADERS. THE WHITE OPPOSITION PARTIES, MIXED IN THEIR RESPONSE, BEGAN MANEUVERING TO FORM ELECTORAL ALLIANCES WITH OR AGAINST SMITH. END SUMMARY.

2. IAN SMITH'S SURPRISE CALL FOR A GENERAL ELECTION FOR AUGUST 31 AND HIS INDICATION THAT
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IT MIGHT BE FOLLOWED BY A NEW INTERNAL SETTLEMENT EFFORT RECEIVED A GENERALLY NEGATIVE REACTION FROM BLACK RHODESIANS. UANC LEADER BISHOP ABEL MUZOREWA REPORTEDLY REJECTED THE PLAN, STATING: "OUR ORIGINAL DEMANDS STAND. WE ARE SEEKING A TRANSFER OF POWER AND WILL ACCEPT NOTHING LESS." HE SAID IF SMITH WERE TRYING TO "BRING A FEW BLACK

FACES INTO HIS GOVERNMENT BENCHES" TO LEGITIMIZE HIS GOVERNMENT, HE WANTED NO PART OF IT. HE WOULD ONLY TALK TO SMITH IF THE LATTER WERE PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE MECHANICS OF HANDING POWER OVER TO THE MAJORITY. THE REV. NDABANINGI SITHOLE REPORTEDLY SAID HE WAS SURPRISED AND DISMAYED AT THE ANNOUNCEMENT; IT APPEARED TO BE ANOTHER DELAYING TACTIC WHICH WOULD NOT SOLVE ANYTHING SINCE IT DID NOT INVOLVE MAJORITY RULE. ACCORDING TO ONE PRESS REPORT, SITHOLE SAID HE WOULD REFUSE IF SMITH ASKED HIM TO JOIN THE GOVERNMENT, BUT ANOTHER QUOTED HIM AS SAYING HE WOULD REVIEW HIS POSITION AFTER THE ELECTION, PATRIOTIC FRONT LEADERS ROBERT MAGUABE AND JOSHUA NKOMO REPORTEDLY DISMISSED THE ELECTION AS IRRELEVANT AND DECLARED: "WE MEAN TO PUSH THAT MAN SMITH OUT AND WE WILL DO IT." JOSIAH CHINAMANA, VICE-PRESIDENT OF NKOMO'S ANCZ, ALSO CALLED THE ELECTION IRRELEVANT SINCE IT WOULD BE CONDUCTED PRIMARILY AMONG THE COUNTRY'S WHITES AND WOULD TAKE ALMOST NO HEED OF RHODESIA'S NEARLY 7. MILLION BLACKS. HE ACCUSED SMITH OF DELAYING TACTICS TO DEFER THE ONSET OF MAJORITY RULE AND OF DELIBERATELY SABOTAGING THE ANGLO-AMERICAN INITIATIVE.

3. BLACKS WHO HAVE BEEN COOPERATING WITH SMITH INDICATED THEY WERE NOT PREPARED TO GO ALONG EITHER.
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ACCORDING TO ONE PRESS REPORT, CHIEF JEREMIAH CHIRAU'S ZUPO PARTY HAS DECLARED IT WILL NOT NOMINATE CANDIDATES FOR THE EIGHT POPULARLY-ELECTED PARLIAMENTARY SEATS RESERVED FOR BLACKS. MP GODFREY CHIDYAUSIKU, WHO HOLDS ONE OF THOSE SEATS, SAID HE WOULD NOT RUN IN THE AUGUST 31 ELECTION. TWO OF THE THREE BLACK DEPUTY MINISTERS IN SMITH'S CABINET REPORTEDLY UNDECIDED ABOUT STANDING FOR TWO OF THE EIGHT SEATS WHICH ARE FILLED BY THE CHIEFS ELECTORAL COLLEGE.

4. THE THREE WHITE OPPOSITION PARTIES-- THE FAR RIGHT RHODESIAN NATIONAL PARTY (RNP), THE CONSERVATIVE RHODESIAN ACTION PARTY(RAP), AND THE MODERATE NATIONAL UNIFYING FORCE (NUF)-- REACTED BY MANEUVERING TO FORM ELECTORAL ALLIANCES, THE RAP, BUOYED BY THE ANNOUNCEMENT JULY 19 THAT DES FROST, EX-VICE CHAIRMAN OF SMITH'S RHODESIAN FRONT PARTY (RF) HAD JOINED THEM, BEGAN PRELIMINARY TALKS WITH THE RNP TO FORM A CONSERVATIVE ALLIANCE" TO KEEP SMITH FROM HADING OVER." PAT BASHFORD, NUF VICE-PRESIDENT, SAID HE BELIEVED HIS GROUP AND THE RF COULD FORM A MODERATE ELECTORAL ALLIANCE BECAUSE BOTH HAD SIMILAR AIMS

AND BECAUSE THIS WOULD AVOID A SPLIT IN THE
MODERATE FORCES.

5. THE SAG HAS REFUSED TO EXPRESS ANY VIEWS ON
SMITH'S ACTION. WHEN ASKED HIS OPINION, FOREIGN
MINISTER BOTHA SAID" I HAVE NO COMMENT AT THIS STAGE." BOWDLER

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